

PRAYER CUSHION**BY****Elois L. Lombert**

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BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention generally relates to a cushion. More particularly, the present invention relates to a portable prayer cushion facilitating a user to comfortably kneel thereon for prayer irrespective of locations.

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A steady number of church goers or piety people prefer kneeling for their religious prayer to simply closing their eyes with his or her posture unchanged. When they feel like praying at work or home, they try to kneel on uninvited carpets, hardwood floors or tile floors. What is inevitably required for those who want to pray, for example, half an hour or more is a seat cushion. However, since such a conventional cushion is designed and manufactured for being placed in abutment with a user's posterior, a cover layer is accompanied. Most of all, kneeling on the conventional cushion leads the knees to slide apart so the users have to drag side to side the knees from time to time, unfavorably resulting in distraction and discomfort.

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Further, considering the top portion of the cushion being in abutment with the user's posterior, an additional

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layer is required in the conventional cushion. Such an additional top layer of the seat cushion causes inconveniences when knelt thereon due to the slipping-against properties between the top layer and the insertions within the cushion. That is, kneeling on the top layer easily causes to the top layer to become displaced from the insertions or stuffing material in the conventional cushion.

A demand is manufacture of a cushion that satisfies those who want to pray on their knees wherever they are and whenever they want. Another demand is to have such a cushion flexible in weight and pressure distribution.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention is contrived to overcome conventional disadvantages. Accordingly, it is an object of the invention to provide a portable prayer cushion that facilitates a user to comfortably kneel thereon. Another object is to enable a user to kneel on the prayer cushion for an extended time period without pressure on the body. A further object is to provide stability to the user's kneeling posture throughout the prayer session.

To achieve these and other objects, the portable prayer cushion according to the present invention comprises a top surface partitioned to a front portion and a rear portion,

where the front portion includes first and second loop lines each having foremost and rearmost points. Here, a first imaginary line through the first foremost point toward the rear portion of the top surface is substantially parallel to
5 a second imaginary line through the second foremost point of the second loop line toward the rear portion of the top surface. In a preferred version, the first imaginary line through the first foremost and rearmost points of the first loop line may be substantially parallel to the second
10 imaginary line through the second foremost and rearmost points of the second loop line. For better performance, surface portions inside the loop lines are recessed to form first and second openings. A peripheral surface is provided to be substantially perpendicular to the top surface.

15 In an embodiment, the cushion is rearwardly slanted from about a mid line dividing the front portion and the rear portion so that the cushion makes a rearward down-slope from the mid line. Selectively, the cushion may be rearwardly slanted from about the rearmost point of each
20 loop line so that the cushion makes a rearward down-slope from the rearmost point.

For storage and setting conveniences, the rear portion may be provided to become hingedly foldable over on the front portion by the first folding line. In a preferred

version, the rear portion is partitioned to a first part and a second part by a second folding line with the first part between the front portion and the second part so that the second part is hingedly foldable over on the first part.

5. The top surface borders the peripheral surface by a front edge line, a rear edge line and side edge lines, and the front edge line is linear and perpendicular to the first and second imaginary lines. Also, the first and second loop lines are linearly aligned along the front edge line.
- 10 Preferably, the side edge lines are each linear and substantially longer than the front edge line, and the front and rear portions of the top surface are about the same as each other in area. The first and second loop lines may be respectively circular or, elliptical. The first and second
- 15 openings are respectively semi-spherical or oval.

In a preferred mode, the top surface is selectively tapered around the rearmost points to form a streamlined curvature from the top surface into the openings, and the cushion is formed of an elastic foam material or preferably

20 of an elastic polyurethane foam material. For a better version, a lowermost point in each of the first and second openings is positioned substantially closer to the foremost points than to the rearmost points, and the depth from the top surface to the lowermost point is about one fifth,

preferably, between about a half and two thirds the thickness of the prayer cushion.

The advantages of the present invention include that:

- (1) the portable prayer cushion facilitates its user to comfortably kneel thereon for prayer without regard to locations, thereby enhancing usability and utility;
- (2) the openings in the top surface serve to stabilize the user's kneeling posture while preventing the knees from sliding apart, thereby maximizing product reliability;
- (3) the selective hinge connection mechanism serves to improve storage efficiency and convenient setting when a plurality of cushions need to be used and stored in a limited area;
- and (4) the elastic foam material preferably adopted for the prayer cushion reserves optimal resiliency for even distribution of weight and pressure, thus maximizing the user satisfaction.

Although the present invention is briefly summarized, the fuller understanding of the invention can be obtained by the following drawings, detailed description and appended claims.

DESCRIPTION OF THE FIGURES

These and other features, aspects and advantages of the present invention will become better understood with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein:

5 FIG. 1 is a perspective view showing a portable prayer cushion with a prayer sitting thereon according to a first embodiment of the present invention;

FIG. 2 is a perspective view of the prayer cushion without the prayer in FIG. 1;

10 FIG. 3 is a cross-sectional view taken along 3-3 in FIG. 2;

FIG. 4 is a cross-sectional view taken along 4-4 in FIG. 2 according to an embodiment of the present invention;

15 FIG. 5 is a cross-sectional view taken along 4-4 in FIG. 2 according to another embodiment of the present invention;

FIGS. 6 and 7 are respectively cross-sectional views to show a second embodiment of the invention; and

FIGS. 7 and 8 are respectively cross-sectional views to show a third embodiment of the invention.

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DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

FIG. 1 shows a portable prayer cushion 10 according to the present invention with a prayer sitting thereon, and FIG. 2 is a view without the prayer in FIG. 1. As shown therein,

the portable prayer cushion **10** comprises a top surface **14** and a peripheral surface **16** substantially perpendicular to the top surface **14**. The peripheral surface **16** may be partitioned to a front surface **18**, side surfaces **20** and a rear surface **22** when the prayer cushion **10** is provided in a rectangular format.

The top surface **14** is preferably partitioned to a front portion **24** and a rear portion **26**. The front portion **24** of the top surface **14** includes first and second loop lines **28**, **30** each having foremost points **F1**, **F2** and rearmost points **R1**, **R2**. In order to define the relative positions of the loop lines **28**, **30**, a first imaginary line **32** that runs through the first foremost point **F1** toward the rear portion **26** of the top surface **14** is substantially parallel to a second imaginary line **34** through the second foremost point **F2** of the second loop line **30** toward the rear portion **26** of the top surface **14**.

Selectively, the first imaginary line **32** that runs through the first foremost and rearmost points **F1**, **F2** of the first loop line **28** may be provided to become substantially parallel to the second imaginary line **34** that runs through the second foremost and rearmost points **F2**, **R2** of the second loop line **30**. In a preferred mode, surface portions inside

the loop lines **28, 30** are respectively recessed to form first and second openings **36, 38**.

In an embodiment, it is recommended that the top surface **14** of the prayer cushion **10** borders the peripheral surface **16** by a front edge line **40**, a rear edge line **42** and side edge lines **44**. Preferably, the front edge line **40** is formed linear and perpendicular to the first and second imaginary lines **32, 34**. In this construction, the first and second loop lines **28, 30** are linearly aligned along the front edge line **40**. Here, the loop lines **28, 30** are separated from each other. Also, the perpendicular alignment of the loop lines **28, 30** to the front edge line **40** serves to facilitate the person **12** sitting on the cushion **10** for prayer to align his or her knees as most desired for prayer.

In an embodiment, as further shown in FIGS. 6 and 7, the cushion **10** is rearwardly slanted from about a mid line **46** dividing the front portion **24** and the rear portion **26** so that the cushion **10** makes a rearward down-slope from the mid line **46**. Selectively, the cushion **10** may be rearwardly slanted from about the rearmost point **R1, R2** of each loop line **28, 30** so that the cushion **10** makes a rearward down-slope from the rearmost point **R1, R2**.

For a better performance, as shown in FIG. 8, the rear portion **26** is provided to become hingedly foldable over on

the front portion **24** by the first folding line **46**. As also shown in FIG. **9**, the rear portion **26** is further partitioned to a first part **26A** and a second part **26B** by a second folding line **50** with the first part **26A** between the front
5 portion **24** and the second part **26B** so that the second part **26B** becomes hingedly foldable over on the first part **26A**. The hinge connections **48**, **50** may be implemented by use of a fabric material.

The side edge lines **44** are each linear and
10 substantially longer than the front edge line **40** for space efficiency and the prayer's easier recognition of the openings **36**, **38** at the start of kneeling for prayer. The front portion **24** of the top surface **14** may be formed equivalent to the rear portion **26** of the top surface **14**.
15 That is, the front and rear portions **24**, **26** of the top surface **14** are about the same as each other in area so that the knees of the person **12** at the time of the kneeling for prayer can be easily guided toward the openings **36**, **38**.

The first and second loop lines **28**, **30** may be
20 respectively formed either circular or elliptical depending upon market requirements. For example, the loop lines **28**, **30** of the prayer cushion **10** may be formed circular when targeted for children and elliptical when targeted for adults. The size of the loop lines **28**, **30** are also variable

depending upon market requirements so that the corresponding openings **36, 38** can be sized accordingly. In the meantime, the first and second openings **36, 38** may be respectively formed either semi-spherical or oval for practical purposes depending on resiliency of the material used for the prayer cushion **10**.

FIGS. 3 and 4 each show cross-sections taken along 3-3 and 4-4 in FIG. 2, and FIG. 5 shows a preferred embodiment compared to FIG. 4. As shown therein, the top surface **14** of the prayer cushion **10** is selectively tapered around the rearmost points **R1, R2** to form a streamlined curvature from the top surface **14** into the openings **36, 38** as shown in FIG. 5. Such a streamlined curvature around **R1** in FIG. 5 serves to provide stability in the prayer's body posture knelt for prayer as well as comfort around the leg portions in abutment with the top surface **14** because the knee portions of the prayer **12** reserves a slightly lower position relative to body parts other than the knee portions. At the same time, the knee portions stationed in the openings **36, 38** with the decently soft support by the streamlined curvature serve to substantially prevent the knees from sliding apart as witnessed in the conventional seat cushions.

In a preferred embodiment, a lowermost point **L1, L2** in each of the first and second openings **36, 38** is positioned

substantially closer to the foremost points **F1, F2** than to the rearmost points **R1, R2** so as to efficiently guide the knee portions of the prayer **12** to a stabilized and comfortable position when knelt on the prayer cushion **10**.

5 Also, the depth **BB** from the top surface **14** to the lowermost point **L1, L2** is formed about one fifth the thickness **AA** of the prayer cushion **10**. In a preferred version, the depth **BB** from the top surface **14** to the lowermost point **L1, L2** is formed between about one fifth and one half the thickness **AA**
10 of the prayer cushion **10**.

In order to derive the best performance, it is recommended that the prayer cushion **10** be formed of a single material. Preferably, the cushion **10** may be formed of an elastic foam material. Selectively, the prayer cushion **10**
15 may be formed of an elastic polyurethane foam material to reserve the optimal resiliency, durability and light-weighted properties.

As discussed above, an advantage of the present invention is that the portable prayer cushion **10** facilitates
20 its user **12** to comfortably kneel thereon for prayer without regard to locations, thereby enhancing usability and utility. Further, the openings **36, 38** in the top surface **14** serve to stabilize the user's kneeling posture while preventing the knees from sliding apart, thereby maximizing product

reliability. Also, the selective hinge connection mechanism serves to improve storage efficiency and convenient setting when a plurality of cushions 10 need to be used and stored in a limited area. In addition, the elastic foam material preferably adopted for the prayer cushion 10 reserves optimal resiliency for even distribution of weight and pressure, thus maximizing the user satisfaction.

While the invention has been shown and described with reference to different embodiments thereof, it will be appreciated by those skilled in the art that variations in form, detail, compositions and operation may be made without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention as defined by the accompanying claims. For example, the prayer cushion 10 can be used for being seated cross-legged for purposes other than prayer.